

## Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 NEAE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00

INRE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 A-01 OPR-02 SY-05 SAM-01 SAB-01

SAJ-01 IO-13 AID-05 SCCT-01 SSM-03 ACDA-07 TRSE-00

SCS-03 SCA-01 DHA-02 OC-06 CCO-00 /115 W

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O P 131356Z AUG 76

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1503

INFO SIT-REP COLLECTIVE PRIORITY 58

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

USNMR SHAPE BELGIUM

CWNCUSNAVEUR, LONDON ENG

CINCUSAFE RAMSTEIN AB GER

CIA WASHDC

COMSIXTHFLT

COMPHIBRON FOUR

COM THREE TWO MAU

CTF SIX ZERO

CTF SIX ONE

CTF SIX TWO

CTG SIX ZERO PT TWO

FICEURLANT NORFOLK VA

FOSIF ROTA SPAIN

DIA WASHDC

CINCUSAREUR HEIDELBERG GER

USDOCOSOUTH NAPLES IT

C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 6921

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MILI, PINS, PINT, LE

SUBJECT: LEBANESE SITUATION AUG 13: TELL ZAATAR HAS FALLEN

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REF: BEIRUT 6902

1. SUMMARY: FINAL CHRISTIAN ASSAULT ON TELL ZAATAR AUG 12 RESULTED IN HASTY DEPARTURE OF SOME 12,000 PERSONS, MOSTLY TO WEST BEIRUT. CHRISTIANS FINALLY ADOPTED COOPERATIVE ATTITUDE WITH RED CROSS AND ARAB LEAGUE. STORIES OF ATROCITIES CIRCULATING. WEST BEIRUT VERY TENSE IN ANTICIPATION OF POSSIBLE REPRISALS. POSSIBLE CHRISTIAN OFFENSIVE FORCE GATHERING IN METN, AS ARAB LEAGUE SEEKS ARRANGE PEACEFUL EVACUATION THERE. NORTH QUIET. SYRIAN REINFORCEMENTS IN SOUTH. KFOUR REPRESENTATIVES AGAIN TO DAMASCUS. KARAME MAY SEEK MEET ASSAD. END SUMMARY.

2. FALL OF TELL ZAATAR. CHRISTIAN FORCES SURROUNDING TELL ZAATAR LAUNCHED FINAL ASSAULT AT DAWN AUG 12 AFTER ANOTHER PALESTINIAN ATTEMPT TO EXFILTRATE CAMP NIGHT BEFORE IN DIRECTION OF MONTE VERDE. ASSAULT WAS UNEXPECTED, AS ARAB LEAGUE, ICRC AND OTHERS WERE STILL DISCUSSING PLANS FOR PEACEFUL EVACUATION TO TAKE PLACE AUG 13. Wafa CLAIMS CHRISTIAN TREACHERY. IN COURSE OF DAY SOME 12,000 PERSONS LEFT TELL ZAATAR IN CHAOTIC MOVEMENTS. SOME 8,000 GOT TO WEST BEIRUT IN TRUCK CONVOYS HASTILY ORGANIZED BY BOTH RED CROSS AND ARAB LEAGUE FORCES. SOME 1,000 WALKED ACROSS MUSEUM CROSSING POINT INTO WEST BEIRUT. SOME 3,000, INCLUDING SMALL NUMBERS OF SYRIANS AND EGYPTIANS, DEPARTED THROUGH CHRISTIAN AREA TOWARDS SYRIA IN 28 ICRC VEHICLES. AT NIGHTFALL, ACCORDING TO AN-NAHAR, QUOTING CHRISTIAN SOURCES, SOME FEW HUNDRED FIGHTERS REMAINED IN AREA, UNDER GROUND. AL DEPUTY KHOLI IS SUPPOSED TO MEET WITH CHRISTIAN LEADERS AUG 13 TO DISCUSS EVACUATION OF ANY REMAINING. EVACUEES TO WEST BEIRUT INCLUDED SWEDISH DOCTORS LARS SMETMAN AND HIS WIFE AGNETA ZELLBI, APPARENTLY PART OF GROUP OF SOME 100 PERSONS TURNED OVER BY PHALANGE TO AL DEPUTY KHOLI PERSONALLY.

3. ATROCITIES AND REPRISALS. CAMILLE CHAMOUN GAVE ORDERS TO HIS FOLLOWERS NOT TO HARM ANYONE SURRENDERING, REGARDLESS OF AFFILIATION, AND AMIN GEMAYEL ACTIVELY COOPERATED WITH ARAB LEAGUE AND CONFIDENTIAL

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ICRC EFFORT ON GROUND. BOTH ICRC AND ARAB LEAGUE EXPRESSED THEIR APPRECIATION FOR PHALANGIST SUPPORT. NEVERTHELESS, UNCONFIRMED STORIES OF ATROCITIES ARE CIRCULATING IN WEST BEIRUT. LEBANESE ARAB ARMY SAYS 300 WERE MASSACRED AT TALLET EL-MIR, INCLUDING WOMEN AND CHILDREN. AL-MUHARRIR REPORTS THAT 400 TELL ZAATAR REFUGEES WERE KILLED BY FORMER INHABITANTS OF AREA WHEN THEY FLED TO DIKWANEH. PHALANGE ITSELF

ADMITS SOME TEN WERE KILLED. AL-MUHARRIR SAYS THAT OTHERS WERE DRAGGED BEHIND VEHICLES AROUND KISRWAN. PALESTINIAN/LEFTIST SOURCES CLAIM THAT NUMBER OF REFUGEES CROSSING INTO WEST BEIRUT WERE MOLESTED. RIGHTIST RADIO CLAIMED THAT, IN REVENGE, SOME DOZEN CHRISTIANS WERE KIDNAPPED IN BARBIR AREA.

4. WEST BEIRUT TENSIONS. HEAVY ARTILLERY FIRING BY BOTH SIDES AUG 13 ACROSS CITY CONFRONTATION LINES, AND GROUND FIGHTING IN GALERIE SEMAAN AREA. SOME 200 ROUNDS FELL IN WEST BEIRUT AREA ACCORDING TO AN NAHAR, INCLUDING ROUNDS WHICH KILLED TWO FRENCH GUARDS AND WOUNDED ONE AT FRENCH AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE IN CORNICHE MAZRAA AREA. NIGHT OF AUG. 12-13, MURABITOUN AND POSSIBLY FATAH ELEMENTS SURROUNDED AREA OF SEVERAL CITY BLOCKS IN VICINITY OF MOUSSAITBEH, JUST NORTH OF CORNICHE MAZRAA AND BEGAN HOUSE-TO-HOUSE SEARCH. PURPOSE OF OPERATION NOT CLEAR, BUT MAY BE EFFORT FIND NUMBER OF ASSYRIAN CHRISTIANS THERE SUPPOSEDLY ASSOCIATED WITH SOME MASSACRE ACTIVITY AT TELL ZAATAR. APPREHENSION THAT THERE MAY BE SOME SHIITE REPRISAL ACTIVITY AGAINST PALESTINIANS IN WEST BEIRUT AS WELL. EARLEEAUG. 13 ANOTHER LEBANESE AIR FORCE HAWKER HUNTER OVERFLEW SOUTHERN PART OF WEST BEIRUT. IN APPARENT EFFORT POUR OIL ON TROUBLED WATERS, ISLAMIC GROUP ISSUED STATEMENT AGU 12 CONDEMNING "BARBARIC CRIMES" AT TELL ZAATAR, COMMENDING COURAGE OF CAMP DEFENDERS "IN THE BELIEF THAT (THEIR) CASE IS JUST CAUSE," AND SENT DELEGATION TO MEET WITH ARAFAT.

5. METN CAMPAIGN. WITH FALL OF TELL ZAATAR,  
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MILITARY INTEREST TURNING TO DEVELOPING CHRISTIAN CAMPAIGN TO DRIVE PALESTINIANS OUT OF STRONGHOLDS IN UPPER METN, PARTICULARLY AT MTEIN AND AINTOURA. L'ORIENT SPEAKS OF "VAST OFFENSIVE" GATHERING AGAINST AINTOURA; HOWEVER, LEBANESE ARMY G-2 SOURCE REFUTES THIS. ONE SOURCE SAYS THAT AL DEPUTY KHOLI HAS TOLD CHRISTIAN LEADERS THAT PLO IS PREPARED TO GIVE UP ITS METN POSITIONS UNDER ARAB LEAGUE COVER. WE HAVE HEARD THAT LEBANESE AIR FORCE AT RAYAK (ASSIMILATED TO SYRIAN-DOMINATED "VANGUARDS") HAS OFFERED CHRISTIAN SIDE AIR SUPPORT FOR OPERATION.

6. MILITARY SITUATION ELSEWHERE. TRIPOLI AREA QUIET. IN SOUTH, AL-MUHARRIR SAYS SYRIANS HAVE MOVED 40 MORE TANKS INTO JEZZINE AREA AND PLAN ATTACK

VILLAGE OF RO.

UNCONFIRMED PRESS STORY SAYS  
SEVERAL HUNDRED TROOPS, BELIEVED TO BE ALGERIANS,  
ARRIVED BY SHIP AT SIDON ALUOQ . IN BEKAA, GREEK  
ARCHBISHOP SALIBI SAYS HIS CO-RELIGIONISTS IN ZAHLE ARE  
QUITE HAPPY WITH SYRIAN OCCUPATION OF THEIR TOWN.

7. SYRIAN CONNECTIONS. SYRIAN LIAISON OFFICER  
COLONEL MADANI TOLD AL DEPUTY KHOLI THAT SYRIAN  
POSITION ON LEBANESE LEFTIST PARTICIPATION IN  
QUADRIPARTITE CEASEFIRE COMMITTEE IS THAT EITHER  
PRO-SYRIAN LEBANESE LEFTIST ELEMENTS SHOULD BE  
INCLUDED, OR NONE AT ALL; JUNBLATTIS SHOULD NOT BE  
SOLE LEBANESE LEFTIST REPRESENTATIVES. MADANI  
RETURNING TO DAMASCUS AUG 13, ACCOMPANIED BY KARIM  
PAKRADOUNI AND MICHEL SAMAHA OF PHALANGE.

8. LEBANESE VOICES. JUNBLATT ABSTAINED FROM  
MEANINGFUL IMMEDIATE COMMENT ON TELL ZAATAR, BUT  
PROMISED MAJOR STATEMENT ON AUG 13, "TO THE LEBANESE  
PEOPLE." HE DID EXPRESS CONCERN TO PRESS ON APPARENT  
DISAFFECTION OF SHIITES AND "ISLAMIC GROUP" FROM  
LEFTIST CAUSE. PRIMIN KARAME IS REPORTEDLY SEEKING  
MEETING WITH SYRIAN PRESIDENT ASSAD. KARAME REPORTEDLY  
ALSO SAYS HE FEARS PALESTINIANS WOULD NOT LET HIM  
MEET WITH KFOUR LEADERS. CAMILLE CHAMOUN HAS  
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ORGANIZED NEW QOMPANY, "PETRO LEBANON," TO IMPORT  
PETROLEUM PRODUCTS. PRESIDENT-ELECT SARKIS SAYS  
LEBANON WILL NEED \$4 BILLION FOR ECONSTRUCTION. HE  
ALSO SAID LEBANON PRESENTLY HOLDS GOLD AND FOREIGN  
EXCHANGE VALUED AT ABOUT THE SAME AMOUNT.  
HUNT

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## Message Attributes

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